2.1.3 CURRENT MISSION

The current INEEL mission is to develop, demonstrate, and deploy advanced engineering technology and systems to improve national competitiveness and security, to make the production and use of energy more efficient, and to improve the quality of the environment. Areas of primary emphasis at INEEL include waste management and waste minimization, environmental engineering and restoration, energy efficiency, renewable energy, national security and defense, nuclear technologies, and advanced technologies and methods. INEEL is the lead laboratory for the National Spent Nuclear Fuel Management Program, which sets standards for developing and maintaining the capability to safely manage DOE's spent nuclear fuel. DOE considers the Environmental Management Program a top priority at INEEL (DOE 1995).

The Environmental Restoration mission is to (1) assess and clean up sites where there are known or suspected releases of hazardous substances into the environment and (2) safely manage contaminated surplus nuclear facilities as they are decommissioned. The Waste Management mission is to (1) protect the safety of INEEL employees, the public, and the environment in the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of INEEL treatment, storage, and disposal facilities and (2) operate these facilities in a manner that is cost-effective, is environmentally sound, complies with regulations, and is publicly acceptable. DOE is committed to fulfilling these missions while bringing all INEEL facilities into compliance with local, State, and Federal regulations.

Mission activities, including those associated with environmental restoration and waste management, occur primarily in nine major facility areas that were developed since the INEEL site was established in May 1949. Figure 2-2 shows the location of these major facility areas. These areas and their transportation corridors encompass the majority of industrial development and land disturbances on the INEEL site, but make up only 2 percent of the total land area of the site. Public roads and utility rights of way that cross the site make up an additional 6 percent of the total land area (DOE 1995). Selected land uses at the INEEL and in the surrounding region are shown on Figure 2-3. Detailed descriptions of the major facility areas at the INEEL can be found in Volume 2 of the *DOE Spent Nuclear Fuel Management and Idaho National Engineering Laboratory Environmental Restoration and Waste Management Programs Final Environmental Impact Statement*, referred to in this document as the SNF & INEL EIS (DOE 1995) and in the *Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory Comprehensive Facility and Land Use Plan* (DOE 1997a).

The INEEL High-Level Waste Program is conducted at the Idaho Nuclear Technology and Engineering Center (INTEC). Prior to 1998, this area of the INEEL was known as the Idaho Chemical Processing Plant (ICPP). INTEC is located in the southwestern part of the INEEL site. The INTEC facilities cover approximately 250 acres and contain more than 150 buildings.

INTEC's original purpose was to function as a one-of-a-kind processing facility for government-owned nuclear fuels from research and defense reactors. The facility recovered rare gases and uranium for reuse from spent nuclear fuel. DOE stopped processing spent nuclear fuel nationwide in 1992 (DOE 1992).

INTEC's current purpose is to:

- Receive and store DOE-assigned (including naval) spent nuclear fuels
- Treat and store HLW until disposal
- Develop technologies for final disposition of spent nuclear fuel, HLW and mixed transuranic waste [sodium-bearing waste (SBW) and newly generated liquid waste]
- Develop and apply technologies to minimize waste generation and manage radioactive and hazardous wastes

Major operating facilities at INTEC include storage and treatment facilities for spent nuclear fuel, HLW, and mixed transuranic waste/SBW. Mixed and low-level wastes are also managed at INTEC. Other operating facilities at INTEC include process development, analytical, and robotics laboratories.

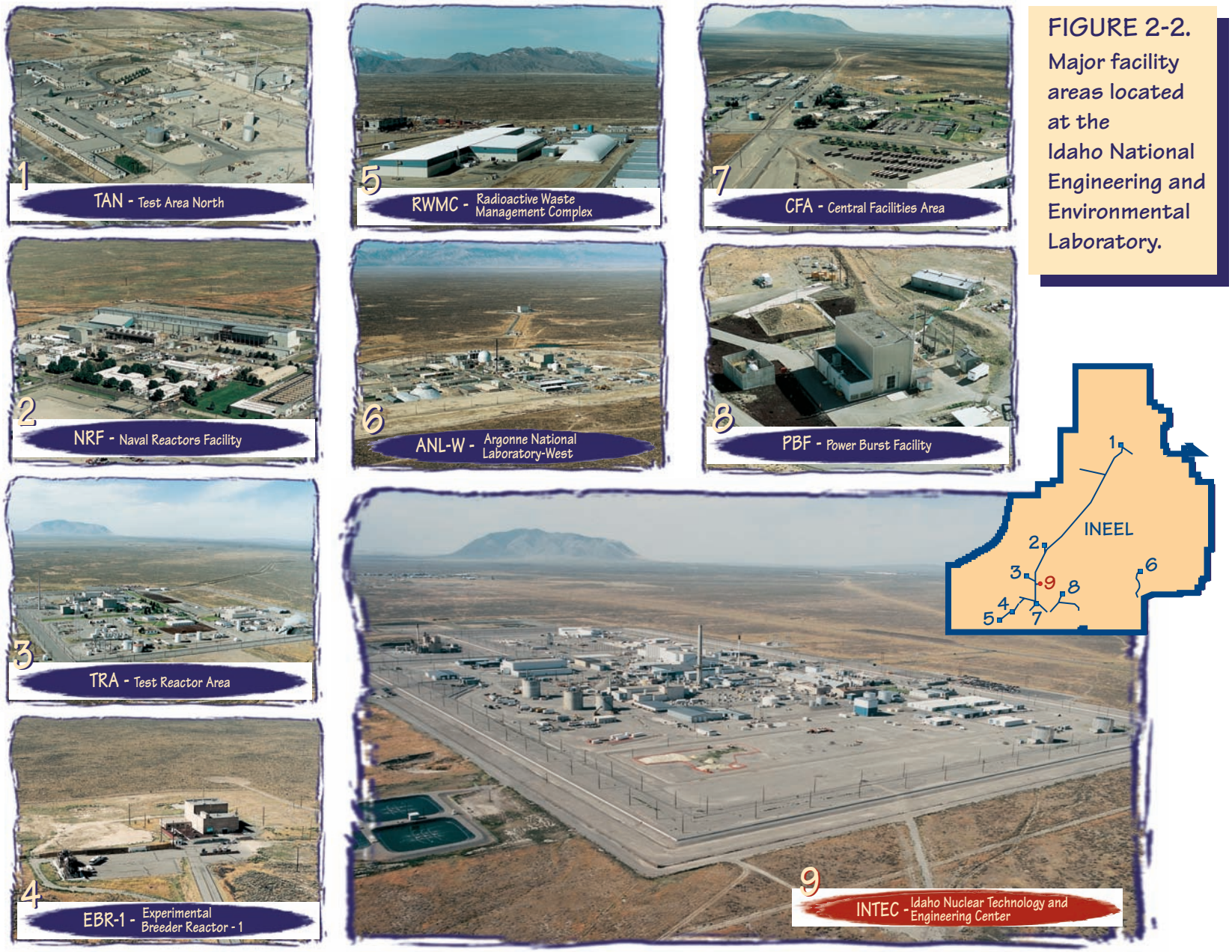

FIGURE 2-2. Major facility areas located at the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory.